



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE JOURNAL OF RACE DEVELOPMENT

Vol. 7

OCTOBER, 1916

No. 2

THE WAR IN EUROPE AND TRUE PAN-AMERICANISM¹

*By Dr. R. S. Naón, Ambassador from the
Republic of Argentina*

It behooves me in the first place to thank the distinguished mayor of your city and the gentlemen at the head of this organization for the high honor they have bestowed upon me in giving me the privilege of addressing you on this day.

It is most gratifying to me to share in your satisfaction in this act common to all the countries of our continent and when the social atmosphere of the entire universe appears as if rarefied; at this very moment when there is substituted, in an enormous part of the civilized world, in place of the distinction of literary and philosophical speculation, in place of the solemn and moralizing tranquillity of scientific investigation, and in place of the fruitful application of its principles to the endless multiplicity of industrial activities, discouragement and sadness and despair in the home, solitude in the laboratory where the life of modern civilization is created, and funereal silence in the industrial workshop where the social and political capacity of the great laboring masses was augmented to bring about the triumph of human democracy, which, emphasizing the dignity of Man and his divine origin, consecrates him entirely to that collective activity which cannot be worked out but upon a solidarity of interests and a profound sentiment of fraternity.

It does not appear that human history can show a time more difficult than that through which we are passing,

¹ The Columbus Day address at Boston, October 12, 1916.

nor does it seem that we can draw from its pages a more fruitful lesson than that presented to us by the sad events of the European War. I believe that I merely affirm a fact when I say that its consequences, for many years to come, will affect, without exception, all the nations of the world.

Our continent has drawn the material for the groundwork of its own civilization from the countries which are shedding their blood in this war: the sound political judgment of England has always been an inspiration and an example for us; the great achievements of German activity and science have contributed in large measure to our welfare and progress; and the nobility and genius of France and Italy in the fields of philosophy and art have constituted and still constitute, for most of the nations of America, the highest model for their mental activities. It might well be said that all the moral and material energies of those peoples have combined to produce this marvelous social transformation called American civilization, a transformation which feels itself affected in its most vital elements by the social consternation and the economic upset brought about by the sorrowful dissension among the great European nations. And that consternation is thoroughly justified when we stop to think that beside the moral ties there are also the ties of blood which have made of Europe and of America brother continents dedicated to the activities of a common race, with fundamentally identical ideas and with mutual interests in the maintenance of the energies indispensable to the complete fulfillment of human destinies.

You will thus see how we are obliged to look with sympathy on the peoples engaged in the present war; how we are compelled to consider with tolerance the motives underlying the sad conflict. There could be no justification at the present moment, in the practical judgment which directs the action of peoples, either for an angry protest or for a philosophical or sentimental criticism against the present generation of those countries which, the heirs of political systems or of institutions or of organizations which evolve slowly, or of more or less explicable prejudices or

passions, have been compelled to face the responsibilities of this sorrowful crisis in which one-half of the world is destroying itself while the other half stands stricken almost dumb with awe and grief!

In the face of this enormous catastrophe the bearing of America cannot but be expectant and reconstructive, if, as I believe, there is still reason to trust that the idea of human solidarity is the final end of social evolution. May God grant that, inspired by that idea and prompted by our community of interests, all the nations of America before long may coöperate in the task, a thousand times blessed, of restoring lasting peace and friendship among the peoples of Europe, together with the sentiment of that solidarity as the basis for their future action. Meanwhile, if it be permitted to us at the present moment only to express this hope, which is in all hearts as the earnest longing of our solidary America, if a protest from her would be but cruel at the present moment, and if a philosophical criticism would be not worthy of respect as a commentary on the painful spectacle, nevertheless, we cannot let our attention wander from it when all our present and future interests are so seriously jeopardized by the conflict. Neglect in the consideration of the factors which have produced the crisis, for the purpose of avoiding them in the organization of our international policy in America, would be, if not criminal on our part, at least a manifestation of organic inconsistency, a demonstration that our countries or our governments are as yet unprepared to comprehend the mission that is destined for us in the concert of the nations of the world. An error among societies as well as among men is either rectified, corrected or modified by the wise coöperative action of those who had the good fortune of not being parties to the discussion of the causes which led to such error. Hence it is that at the present hour it is for us, the countries far removed from the scene and aloof from the interests in the midst of which the European dissensions have been growing until this terrible climax, to take up the arduous but glorious task of reincarnating modern civilization. But to do this it becomes essential to

readjust the system of our political ties; to correct, until they are made to vanish, the causes of possible disagreements; and, finally, to cement American solidarity, founding it upon the only immovable base in the relations of countries—that is to say, upon the maintenance of the principles of right, of justice and of reciprocal tolerance.

I do not believe that I err when I advance as an immediate cause of the sorrowful European situation, the prevalence of an international political system based on antagonistic interests of all kinds. With pain I reflect upon the fact that if prejudice and passion had not prevented those interests from harmonizing, these titanic efforts in the struggle we are witnessing might have made up a sum of energies and constructive action so enormous that their result in benefit to civilization and to progress and to life would have exceeded by far the most daring flight of human imagination.

Unfortunately, European civilization has developed in fact as the product of a national individualistic organization without the conception of continental interests and without the notion of moral achievements common to all the countries, upon which the responsibility for their preservation also rested.

Face to face with the interests and conveniences of the one, were the interests and conveniences of the others; face to face with the presumed national destinies of the one, were the presumed national destinies of the others; face to face with the political and social traditions of the one, were the political and social traditions of the others; and, finally, face to face with the material and moral progress of the one, was the material and moral progress of the others; and what is more painful still is that this material and moral progress appears not to have been provoked solely by a sentiment of sound emulation, by a feeling of coöperation inspired by the intention of fulfilling the individual task in the common work of collective progress. No; its production appears to have been prompted also by feelings of intense rivalry on every hand, eager to utilize them in the inevitable struggle, thus giving vent to sentiments which

carry with them belittlement and hatred and which contaminate the atmosphere of tolerance and respect, which is the only atmosphere in which the cultivation of friendly relations is possible.

But all the circumstances which have united to bind our nations with the European nations, making, as I have said before, of Europe and of America continents dedicated to the activities of a common race, also make us concerned for the modification of those conditions, not by a direct physical influence, which would not accord with the moral action of one nation upon another, but by the indirect moral influence always exercised upon human organisms by the success of the action of those among whom we live.

To America is reserved the honorable task of exercising an influence in the transformation of the old international organization of the world by the example of its organization of solidarity, which, at the same time that it maintains in all its vigor and to its fullest extent every one of the national organisms, lives the international life without dread, without disturbance, and without conflict.

By rare good fortune, when we inherited the elements of the civilization of those great nations, we did not inherit the prejudices and the passions which have burst out into the horrible universal hecatomb we are witnessing. Our political developments are not controlled by the systems of government which, although they have experienced a great and favorable evolution, live still influenced by the tradition of principles the wisdom of which was questioned by the glorious framers of the constitutions of this continent.

There do not exist in our national organisms, nor have there ever existed, those differences of caste which always leave, notwithstanding the lapse of time, a sentiment of inequality and hatred in the very depths of society; nor do we have to contend with fundamental ethnic differences: all of the nations of America are, with more or less intensity, organisms in course of formation, the product of a similar cosmopolitanism in which all races are fused together and all ideals evolve openly toward an American formation whose future differentiation will be governed more by the

geographical and climatological characteristics of each nation than by its ethnic elements. That formation, in the last analysis, will produce an American type from one end of the continent to the other, with similar and common ideals and aspirations, with the same purposes and needs, as well as with an identical political conception developed under the influence of republican institutions, uniform in all our countries, and which live, stimulated by that profound sentiment of individual and collective equality imposed upon us as a necessity of our spirit, by democratic sentiment, both in our national activities and in the maintenance of our international relations.

These are not the only conditions of similarity which distinguish the very peculiar position of America, facilitating the fulfilment of common destinies without essential friction to disturb an intense and fruitful coöperation. At the bottom of every one of our elements there lives and palpitates a common feeling of horror for warfare among the countries of this continent, and this feeling, ladies and gentlemen, is prompted, rather than by a political idea, rather than by selfish advantage, by a feeling of continental fraternity still undefined but felt as intensely in the valleys of your Mississippi or on the prairies of your triumphant West, as on the exuberant plains of the tropics or in the cold and remote southernmost regions of my country. It is the presentiment of a common destiny to the realization of which we also consider ourselves bound by the earnest desire to consecrate the best energies of each people without considerations of relativity, which serve solely to bring to the surface fruitless and disturbing selfishness. Steadfast visionaries of the same destinies and of the same achievements, to accomplish their transcendental mission in history the peoples of America must live a life of loyalty and of moral vigor, recognizing the respective progress of each, duly consecrating the merits of those who have first succeeded, and setting them up as models, as examples and as sources of encouragement for the action of the others who follow in the rear, strenuously struggling forward, without measuring distance or being halted by obstacles.

The history of the centuries has perhaps never witnessed a possibility equal to that presented by the American continent for the realization of the old and noble longing for human solidarity.

Many distinguished spirits have cherished, at different times and in different parts of the continent, the thought of a close international union among all the countries of America. The efforts made to bring this thought to realization are a mystery to no one. But you, better than any one else, know that in republican nations it is only the ideas which have become rooted in the clash of public opinion that acquire the dynamic force necessary for the policy of governments to produce all its effects.

Since the period of our respective political emancipations, Pan-Americanism has been a latent idea in all of the peoples of the continent. It has become crystallized from time to time in the councils of governments, and in universities and in congresses has been the subject-matter of more or less brilliant philosophical or political speculation. It is to be found also in the sentiment of the Pan-American masses as a vague longing, but still it lacks the necessary consistency to permit its opinions to be clearly defined and to combine them into a political force capable of bringing to fruition the noble and patriotic efforts which men of government all over the continent are at the present time putting forth.

With my convictions as a Pan-Americanist, I believe in the advantage of emphasizing at any hazard that definition. There must be cleared up in all minds the notion of the practical convenience for all countries of America to be found in a policy of continental solidarity which, founded upon the basis of common institutions, may allow the destinies of each to be worked out without the disturbance provoked by antagonistic interests struggling for a predominance which sooner or later leads to the use of force. It is necessary that all of us be convinced of the existence of a continental aspiration, of an aspiration which can be fulfilled only by the effort of each nation in the full exercise of its undisputed and indisputable political sover-

eignty, applied spontaneously and wholly to the realization of the common task. The progress which time and education may produce in social and political ideas or in the exercise of republican institutions by each of our nations, little by little will perfect the work and emphasize the efficiency of our action.

It is necessary to bring to the conviction of the Pan-American masses the idea that the national sovereignty of each country is not subject to interpretation by the others, that its exercise is controlled solely by constitutional responsibilities or by the rules established among civilized countries by international law. Finally, in the concert of the various capacities as well as in that of the achievements of the different nations of the continent, it is necessary that the attainment of the greatest be taken as a common attainment, that the capacity of the richest be promoted as a common capacity, that the fruitful activity of the industrious be encouraged as a common quality, and, finally, that the mental and moral energies of each be considered and respected and valued as a common and consistent patrimony of all. In a word, it is necessary to bring about a pathological normality by reducing the consequences of the hypertrophy of national personality from which some of them may be suffering, and by removing the feeling of distrust and annoyance which might be produced in the minds of the others by indiscreet manifestations of an egotism which does not coincide either with moral vigor or with the conveniences of a fruitful association.

The day when the public spirit of each of the nations of America becomes imbued with the feeling of absolute tranquillity with which they can devote themselves to the organization of the administration of their territorial patrimony, without being disturbed by the fear of an attack; the day they can dedicate to practice within their relative political capacities the republican institutions under the protection of which they are organized, and exercise their political sovereignties under the sole control which constitutional limitations or the sanctions of international life impose, on that day we shall be able to say that the idea

of Pan-Americanism has triumphed, that peace and tranquillity and the greater efficiency of common action by the continent have been defined, and that the republican form of government, up to the present time an experiment more or less successful, has become consecrated definitely as the most efficient political instrument for the realization of the welfare of peoples through the virtue of our continent and for the benefit of the world.

In the meantime, upon those of us who directly or indirectly share the responsibilities of the guidance of our respective countries, is imposed the arduous but fruitful task of intensifying our efforts toward the crystallization of that sentiment of true Pan-Americanism in the thought and in the opinion of all peoples until the advantages of moral and social solidarity shall define the American continent and its civilization as the most perfect expression of an international life founded on the exercise of the highest principles of justice and right and reciprocal tolerance, placed at the service of the permanent interests of mankind.